

## Concept note on TSP

### Context:

Balanced growth and economic development is the ultimate aim of every country and the strategic plans (Fifth five year plans as in case of India) are designed accordingly. After 25 years of independence, and successful completion of four five year and three annual plan, it was realized by policy makers that the Scheduled Tribes are still way behind the mainstream development process. Apart from this, it was also been realized that the general plan schemes and programmes designed for the overall development of the economy hardly improved their socio-economic status. Similarly, the benefit of such general welfare schemes did not percolate down towards the development of STs Population of the country in any significant manner. In order to eradicate these issues, the Tribal Sub-Plan was initiated during Fifth Five Year Plan) for socioeconomic amelioration of the tribal communities who comprise 22.13 percent in Odisha. The ST development effort was revamped and invigorated in order to fulfill the constitutional mandates of ensuring better quality of life of the schedule tribes. In between 36 years have passed and even now, the Human Development Indices (HDI) of the STs are the lowest in Odisha.

The basic objective of Tribal Sub-Plan is to channelise the flow of outlays and benefits from the general sectors in the Central Ministries/Departments for the development of Scheduled Castes and Schedules Tribes at least in proportion to their population, both in physical and financial terms. The Mid Term Appraisal of the Eleventh Plan has noted that several Central Ministries/Departments have not earmarked adequate funds to TSP, proportionate to the share of STs in the population.

The broad objectives of the TSP are as follows:

- Substantial reduction in poverty and un-employment.
- Creation of productive assets in favour of Scheduled Tribes to sustain the growth likely to accrue through development efforts.
- Human resource development of the Scheduled Tribes by providing adequate educational and health services, and
- Provision of physical and financial security against all types of exploitation and oppression.

The Tribal Sub-Plans are integral to the Annual Plans as well as Five Year Plans, making provisions therein non-divertible and non-lapsable, with the clear objective of bridging the gap in socio-economic development of the STs within a specified period. But, the major issues and challenges are the provisions are grossly violated by the department authorities. The money earmarked for tribal development is spent in other ways making a mockery of the above objectives. There is no monitoring and evaluation on behalf of the concerned departments and nobody is accountable for it. Let us embark upon some of the major policy and operational issues:

- In Odisha, the TSP funds which should not be diverted for other purposes are diverted for infrastructure development activities other than TSP areas.

- Provision of less TSP budget in annual plans in comparison to the tribal population and thus violating the guideline.
- The TSP budget should focus the empowerment of Tribal leaders (community leaders) through trainings, exposures and education.
- The annual plans do not have any realistic physical target for TSP schemes / Programmes.
- On behalf of the government there is no periodical benchmark surveys regarding the socioeconomic status of the tribal people in TSP areas, there is no perspective plan, no vision document for long term goals and outcomes.
- Last but not the least, the SC and ST development department is spending less than the desired level of expenditure earmarked for various development purposes.

The TSP funds are allocated from the consolidated fund of India under article 275(I) is a central sector scheme under which 100 per cent financial assistance is being provided to the states through the nodal Ministry of Tribal Affairs. All revenues received, loans raised and all moneys received by the Government in repayment of loans are credited to the Consolidated Fund of India and hence the communities and civil societies have a role to monitor it.

The major tribal friendly acts like PESA and FRA implementation and the expenses incurred by the institutions and departments may supplement and complement TSP funds, programmes and schemes.

- 1) New guidelines should be developed taking account of the experience thus far to guide the formation of the Sub-Plan in 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan.
- 2) TSP programmes/schemes should be made transparent and monitoring is needed.
- 3) Only those schemes should be included under TSP that ensures direct benefits to individuals or families belonging to Scheduled Tribes.
- 4) Priority should be given for providing basic minimum services like primary education, health, drinking water, nutrition, rural housing, rural electrification and rural link road.
- 5) Wage component, especially under rural employment schemes, should not be included under TSP.
- 6) Schemes to develop agriculture and allied activities like animal husbandry, dairy development, vocational training, etc. that provide a source of livelihood to ST population should be included.
- 7) Innovative projects that draw upon institutional finance to supplement plan allocations may be drawn up.

State Governments should take initiative to generate awareness among the general public about the schemes to be implemented/being implemented for the development of STs by the different departments of the State Governments through electronic and print media.

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